United Nations CRPD/C/SR.367

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

.: General
.7 February 2018

Original: English

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Nineteenth session

Summary record of the 367th meeting*
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, 19 February 2018 at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Degener

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* No summary record was issued for the 366th meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35

Initial report of Nepal (CRPD/C/NPL/1; CRPD/C/NPL/Q/1 and CRPD/C/NPL/Q/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Nepal took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Upadhaya** (Nepal), introducing his country's initial report (CRPD/C/NPL/1), said that the Government had prepared the report in consultation with national human rights institutions and relevant civil society organizations.

3. The adoption of a democratic and inclusive Constitution in September 2015 had marked the conclusion of the peace process launched in 2006. The Constitution enshrined an array of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and guaranteed inclusive democracy, pluralism, the rule of law, an independent judiciary, representative and accountable governance, and social and economic justice. Inclusion, non-discrimination and social justice were the fundamental tenets of the Constitution, which provided for inclusive representation of marginalized and disadvantaged communities in all State organs and promoted affirmative action to that end. It provided opportunities for the participation of persons with disabilities at the local and provincial levels and in the Federal Parliament, particularly the Upper House.

4. The Constitution transformed Nepal into a federal State in order to uphold inclusive and participatory decision-making at the federal, provincial and local levels and ensure proportional representation of all sections of society in all three tiers of the Government. A series of elections at the local level and to provincial assemblies and the Federal Parliament had been held in five phases. They had institutionalized several transformative initiatives aimed at the empowerment and participation of women, indigenous people, persons with disabilities and minorities. As a result of the affirmative actions launched since 2007, there were now 626 persons with disabilities in various civil service positions. There were four persons with disabilities in the Federal Parliament and 22 in various leadership positions at the local level.

5. The Constitution guaranteed the right to live in dignity and strictly prohibited discrimination based on disability. It guaranteed free access to education, including higher education, for persons with disabilities. Visually impaired citizens were legally entitled to Braille education, while citizens with hearing and speech impairments were entitled to education in sign language. The State provided special protection and facilities for children with disabilities. Persons with disabilities who were unable to take care of themselves were legally entitled to social security.

6. The Disability Rights Act, 2017, which had replaced the Disabled Persons Protection and Welfare Act, 1982, adopted a rights-based rather than a welfare-based approach. It had broadened the definition of persons with disabilities to reflect the Convention, recognized diversity, eliminated derogatory narratives and criminalized the use of such narratives. The Act also provided for a national mechanism to coordinate, monitor and promote the effective implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities at all levels of government. Disability rights regulations were at an advanced stage of formulation, and the Government was revising the National Policy and Plan of Action on Disability in line with the Disability Rights Act, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Incheon Strategy.

7. The National Criminal Code, 2017, prescribed a heavy penalty for discrimination based on disability. The Code of Criminal Procedure and the Code of Civil Procedure accorded top priority to cases involving persons with disabilities as parties to court hearings. In addition, the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulated that no person with disability should be remanded in custody if she or he was implicated in an offence punishable by up to 10 years' imprisonment.

8. Local authorities were responsible under the Local Government Act, 2017, for the distribution of identity cards, social security, compilation and maintenance of data,

provision of services, and the operation and management of rehabilitation centres for persons with disabilities.

9. Current action on behalf of persons with disabilities included: the implementation of a Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme; promotion of awareness-raising programmes throughout the country in partnership with organizations of persons with disabilities; support for the production and distribution of assistive devices; support for the effective operation of care homes; provision of grants to organizations of persons with disabilities; distribution of identity cards and social security allowances; tax exemption for assistive devices, vehicles and wheelchairs, including electronic wheelchairs; capacity-building for persons with disabilities, their organizations and law enforcement agencies; establishment of a help desk at the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and in each district office for women and children; digitization of records of persons with disability with identity cards; and implementation of the National Building Code for improved accessibility.

10. With regard to access to education, 380 resource centres, 32 special schools and 22 integrated schools had been operating throughout the country. A total of 76,470 students with disabilities were enrolled at the elementary and secondary level. In addition, free health-care services were provided to persons with disabilities in public hospitals. Affirmative action was being taken to promote public-sector employment opportunities. Disability-friendly physical infrastructures were being developed and disability-friendly public transport vehicles were being introduced.

11. The topography of Nepal presented daunting challenges to accessibility. Other challenges included the high risk of natural disasters, the paucity of financial, technical and other resources, difficulties in mainstreaming disability issues in federal structures, and capacity constraints impeding the introduction of new technology.

12. The newly introduced federal system of governance would facilitate more decentralized implementation of the Convention, and the new Constitution would facilitate the institutionalization of a rights-based approach. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was fully reflected in national development plans and policies.

13. Nepal reaffirmed its commitment to tackle inequality and discrimination by collecting disaggregated data, to improve its knowledge of the impact of multiple forms of discrimination on the rights of different groups of persons with disabilities, and to devise appropriate responses through laws, policies and programmes. Collaboration and partnership with development partners and civil society would be further strengthened to that end.

14. Nepal was confident that its efforts to uphold the provisions enshrined in the Convention would be greatly assisted by the Committee's deep insight and expertise.

15. **Ms. Ansari** (National Human Rights Commission of Nepal) said that the Government of Nepal was taking progressive action to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities. However, there were still many areas in which improvements were required.

16. The Constitution guaranteed the rights of person with disabilities, and the Disability Rights Act, which had been reviewed by the National Human Rights Commission, was compatible with the Convention. They both guaranteed the right to life, equality, non-discrimination and equal protection before the law, the rights of women, children and older persons, freedom of movement, and the right to free education, free medical facilities, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom from torture and personal integrity, social security, employment opportunities and access to justice.

17. However, very few persons with disabilities were aware of their rights and the facilities provided by the Government. Stereotypes were still deeply rooted in society and led to discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities. Governmental authorities also perceived them in some cases as neither rights holders nor stakeholders in society. As a result, many public services were still inaccessible and very few persons with disabilities had been elected in the recent federal elections.

18. Access to justice was impeded by the absence of interpreters in courts. Medicines that were essential for the treatment of persons with disabilities were frequently unavailable, even in public hospitals. Persons with disabilities belonging to the more vulnerable sections of society, such as Dalits and poor and marginalized groups, faced multiple human rights violations.

19. The National Human Rights Commission of Nepal reiterated its recommendation to the Government to adopt laws and policies that were in compliance with the Convention. The Government should conduct effective awareness-raising campaigns to protect persons with disabilities from various types of discrimination, violence, abuse and injustice. A rights-based approach should be adopted in infrastructure development and urbanization procedures, and top priority should be given to endorsement of the rule of law.

20. Collaboration among government agencies, national institutions, NGOs, community-based organizations and development partners could play a pivotal role in raising awareness and building skills in the area of disability.

21. **Mr. Kim** Hyung Shik (Country Rapporteur) said that he wished to acknowledge the State party's consultations with a range of stakeholders, including the Office of the Prime Minister and representatives of the national human rights institutions of Nepal, in preparing the report. It was regrettable, however, that organizations of persons with disabilities had not been involved in the process. He welcomed the legal reforms, policy and programme developments, and the involvement of cross-cutting ministries in the process of implementing the Convention. The main purpose of the current dialogue was to monitor how comprehensive legislative reforms were harmonized across relevant government ministries and backed by monitoring mechanisms.

22. He asked whether the State party had adopted a national action plan to implement the Disability Rights Act of 2017, and whether the definition of disability in the Act was consistent with the Convention. He also enquired about the data used by the State party in developing its national disability policies.

23. Despite the State party's declared intention to adopt a rights-based definition of disability, the classifications for the disability card appeared to fall short of such a definition.

24. As the Disability Rights Act, 2017, had not been translated into English and was not available outside Nepal, the Committee would like to be informed of some of the major changes it incorporated.

25. As some of the issues that would be raised during the dialogue with the State party were of critical importance, the Committee would appreciate receiving written replies or supplementary comments in response to questions that the delegation was unable to address comprehensively during the dialogue.

Articles 1–10

26. **Mr. Martin** asked whether disability rights training courses had been provided for politicians, public officials, teachers and lawyers, and, if not, whether there were plans to introduce such courses. He also wished to know whether persons with intellectual disabilities participated in organizations of persons with disabilities and, if not, whether action would be taken to ensure that their voices were heard.

27. **Mr. Tatić** said that he would welcome an update on the enforcement of the judicial decisions mentioned in paragraph 10 of the State party's replies to the list of issues (CRPD/C/NPL/Q/1/Add.1). He asked whether any court cases had been brought under the new legislation for disability-based discrimination, and whether multiple discrimination was considered an aggravated form of discrimination in the State party's legislation and jurisprudence. He would be grateful for information on measures taken, and funds allocated, to ensure access to support and protection services and social and health care for children with disabilities living in remote areas. The delegation might comment on any plans to make training on accessibility and universal design a mandatory part of the university curriculum and State exams for architects, urban planners and other professionals in that area, and whether the Committee's general comment No. 2 on accessibility had been

translated into Nepali. He would appreciate information on accessibility for wheelchair users visiting the country, including support services at airports and the accessibility of public transport, hotels and government buildings.

28. **Mr. Alsaif** said that he would like to know about legal remedies, redress and compensation available to persons with disabilities who had been the victims of disability-based discrimination. He would welcome confirmation of whether reasonable accommodation was provided to persons with disabilities in all areas of life. He would appreciate information on the number of children with disabilities with access to early intervention services, and how those services distinguished between diseases and impairments.

29. **Mr. You** Liang said that he would like to know to what extent organizations of persons with disabilities had been consulted on the final version of the State party's report. He would be interested to hear about concrete measures to ensure the right to marriage and reproductive services for women with disabilities, especially those with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, and how women with disabilities were empowered to ensure their economic independence. He wished to know whether the State party provided sufficient resources for children with disabilities to have access to early intervention rehabilitation services and education facilities. The delegation might comment on how the Convention had been publicized at national and local levels, and whether the general public, including in rural areas, was aware of the human rights of persons with disabilities.

30. **Mr. Lovászy**, referring to paragraph 28 of the State party's replies to the list of issues, said that he would be interested to hear about concrete results and achievements based on goals set under the periodic plan covering the years 2014 to 2017.

31. **Mr. Chaker** asked whether public buildings, including schools, hospitals and administrative buildings, were fully accessible to persons with all kinds of disabilities, even in remote parts of the country. Were accessibility and universal design part of the training provided to architects, engineers and designers?

32. **Mr. Langvad** said that he would like to know how and when the State party would accelerate the process of developing a strategic plan of action, with sufficient financial resources, aimed at abolishing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constituted discrimination against persons with disabilities, and how organizations of persons with disabilities would be involved in that process. He would be grateful for specific information on the meaningful involvement of indigenous persons with disabilities in the process of adopting national policies and legislation and in relation to international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. He would also appreciate up-to-date information on support services, awareness-raising and budget allocation in the areas of education, health, rehabilitation, independent living, employment and social protection for indigenous persons with disabilities. The delegation might comment on efforts to move away from the degrading stereotypes of persons with disabilities in the caste system and create awareness of them as full rights holders.

33. **Mr. Basharu** asked what steps were being taken to bring Nepal's definition of disability, which employed a number of derogatory terms and was based on the medical model of disability, into line with the Convention. He would also be grateful for information on efforts to combat discrimination and violence against women and girls with disabilities, including the intersectional disability faced by indigenous women with disabilities, and how they were involved in decision-making processes that affected them. He asked how persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were involved in the State party's awareness-raising campaigns and to what extent the media were engaged in portraying a positive image of persons with disabilities in society.

34. **Mr. Babu** said that the delegation should comment on how the human rights of indigenous women with disabilities were guaranteed, citing specific laws and policies. He would also be interested to hear about any major public awareness-raising campaigns on the rights of persons with disabilities, including their outcomes.

35. **Mr. Ruskus** said that he would welcome information on measures planned to ensure that all persons with disabilities, including those from indigenous communities and with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, received disability identity cards. He would like to hear about policies and measures to ensure the right of all children with disabilities to receive support in inclusive settings, including early intervention and inclusive education.

36. **Mr. Buntan** said that he wished to know to what extent the Government had systematized the active involvement, with the necessary financial and technical support, of organizations of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, including the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies and legislation. He would appreciate confirmation of whether the failure to provide reasonable accommodation was considered a form of disability-based discrimination under the newly enacted Disability Rights Act. If so, had any complaints been brought before the courts? He asked what measures were taken to tackle the problem of abandonment of children with disabilities. He would be grateful for information on any efforts to enforce accessibility standards and introduce sanctions for those who failed to comply with them.

37. **Mr. Ishikawa** said that he would appreciate information on specific measures for the empowerment of women with disabilities and the elimination of gender-based violence against them. He wondered whether professionals who worked with women with disabilities who had been the victims of gender-based violence received training in accordance with the Convention's human rights model. He would welcome information on what was being done to protect and promote the human rights of indigenous persons with disabilities.

38. **Mr. Parra Dussan** said that he would be interested to know whether the State party's definition of disability, which had numerous shortcomings, had been amended in 2017 and whether there were any plans for further amendment following the current dialogue with the Committee.

39. **Mr. Kabue** said that the delegation might comment on whether the system of categorizing disabilities had been reviewed to ensure that it did not give rise to discrimination and was not open to abuse. He wished to know whether any specific measures were in place to address the needs of indigenous persons with disabilities when monitoring the work of the National Inclusion Commission, the Indigenous Nationalities Commission and the Madhesi Commission, inter alia. He would welcome information on how well organizations of persons with disabilities were able to effectively participate in decision-making processes and monitoring of government activities. He would also like to know more about the involvement of persons with disabilities in the preparation and monitoring of the accessibility strategy.

40. **Mr. Pyaneandee** asked whether there was a mechanism in place for the registration of organizations of persons with disabilities and, if so, on what criteria it was based. He would be interested to hear about plans to engage such organizations in the implementation of the new legislation on disability rights. He would be grateful for information on the number and type of complaints received in the past two years in relation to the violation of the rights of persons with disabilities. He would also appreciate information on any specific policies in place to combat the particular discrimination faced by indigenous women and girls with disabilities and make them more visible in society.

The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

41. **Mr. Upadhaya** (Nepal) said that civil society organizations had participated in both the preparation of the State party report and the drafting of the newly enacted Disability Rights Act. In line with the Constitution, the Act provided for the right of every person to live in dignity, the protection, empowerment and development of persons with disabilities, and the strict prohibition of discrimination on the ground of disability. The Government had mobilized significant resources to support the implementation of measures aimed at persons with disabilities, as had the country's development partners. Work was currently under way on the formulation of the relevant regulations, with efforts being made to ensure coordination and harmonization.

42. **Mr. Ghimire** (Nepal) said that national legislation expressly prohibited all forms of discrimination based on disability and victims of discrimination had access to a number of different legal remedies. They could opt for mediation or alternative dispute resolution, or they could submit their cases to the courts or their local district officer, who had a quasi-judicial function. Persons found guilty by the courts of acts of discrimination against persons with disabilities were subject to a fine and/or imprisonment, depending on the severity of the offence, and their victims were eligible for compensation. Denial of reasonable accommodation had been included as a form of discrimination under the 2017 Disability Rights Act, which had recently entered into force on 15 January 2018. No cases involving that type of discrimination had yet been recorded, however.

43. The federal, provincial and local levels of government played their part in upholding the rights of persons with disabilities and implementing the provisions of the Convention. The local authorities, however, assumed the lead role of making reasonable accommodation available at the grass-roots level so that persons with disabilities could actively participate in community and family life. The courts had also been very proactive in safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities and had issued several orders directing the Government to make monthly allowances and free education available to persons with disabilities.

44. In regard to eliminating the negative stereotypes surrounding disability, significant efforts had been made to raise the general public's awareness of the Convention and promote the rights of persons with disabilities. The Convention had been translated into the Nepali language and disseminated widely in the national media. The national education system and school curriculum had also been strengthened to incorporate a human rights approach and teach the importance of protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. Similarly, training courses on the provisions of the Convention had been held for judges, magistrates, lawyers and other relevant stakeholders in the judicial system to strengthen the access of persons with disabilities to justice.

45. The Government remained committed to taking a cross-cutting approach to disability issues and had fostered close partnerships with civil society and relevant development partners. It had made concerted efforts to consult with organizations of persons with disabilities on the implementation of the Convention as well as the drafting of the 2017 Disability Rights Act.

46. **Mr. Dhital** (Nepal) said that, with the steady rise in the number of organizations of persons with disabilities in recent years, persons with disabilities had been enabled to make their voices heard at the national level, and the Government took their needs into account despite facing resource constraints. It had worked closely with relevant stakeholders to improve the accessibility of the physical environment and had sought to increase access to assistive technology by strengthening partnerships with the private sector. Similarly, efforts had been made to provide direct support to persons with disabilities and their families in order to facilitate their inclusion and active participation in all areas of society, including in mainstream education and the employment sector. Affirmative measures had also been taken to increase the number of persons with disabilities in political life, which had resulted in the election of four persons with disabilities to the Federal Parliament. Some 22 persons with disabilities had also recently taken up positions on local councils.

47. In response to questions regarding access to justice, he confirmed that all forms of violence against persons with disabilities, including sexual abuse, had been defined as serious criminal offences and were subject to severe punishment. He also stressed that the Government had introduced the colour-coded disability identity card scheme for persons with disabilities as a means of ensuring that each person received the right level of support according to their needs, not as a form of discrimination. All forms of discrimination based on disability had been prohibited under the 2017 Disability Rights Act.

48. **Mr. Paudyal** (Nepal), drawing the Committee's attention to paragraphs 26 to 31 of the replies to the list of issues, said that the accessibility guidelines adopted by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare in 2013 were an instrument of law and, as such, were binding. They had been developed in cooperation with the National Federation of Persons with Disabilities and a number of organizations of persons with disabilities, which were also involved in their implementation and monitoring. The guidelines set minimum

accessibility standards for services and buildings and provided for the principle of reasonable accommodation.

49. **Ms. Aryal** (Nepal), recalling that Nepal had adopted a zero-tolerance policy regarding gender-based violence, said that all forms of violence, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, were prohibited under the Constitution and were punishable by law, which also provided for compensation for victims. Service and rehabilitation centres had been established to provide support to victims of gender-based violence, including persons with disabilities, and dedicated police units consisting of women officers had been set up to handle cases involving women and children. Furthermore, the Gender-Based Violence Alleviation Fund and Emergency Child Rescue Fund were used to provide a range of services for survivors. The Constitution protected women's right to sexual and reproductive health, and considerable progress had been made in that connection. The State provided an allowance for children with profound and severe disabilities ranging from 600 to 2,600 Nepalese rupees per month, while the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare provided caretaker training for family members, as well as skills training in order to enhance prospects for income-generating activities.

50. **Mr. Gautam** (Nepal) said that the chief aim of the Disability Rights Act was to ensure substantive equality; the Act's definition of a person with disabilities and its underpinning principles were in line with the Convention. The Act took into consideration cross-cutting aspects, such as non-discrimination and the right to community life, and made all levels of government, families, public institutions, including schools, and medical professionals accountable for the treatment of persons with disabilities. In addition, the Act provided for administrative and judicial remedies; relevant training was provided to members of the judiciary. From August 2018 onwards, the civil courts would have the power to enforce the duty of families to provide appropriate care for members with disabilities.

51. The fact that a victim had disabilities was an aggravating circumstance in relation to criminal offences, and discrimination on grounds of disability carried a penalty of up to 3 years in prison and a fine of 30,000 rupees. The Code of Civil Procedure provided for special arrangements, including to enable physical access to the court, when either party to proceedings had a disability. Under criminal law, priority was given to proceedings involving persons with disabilities, who could not be remanded into custody if the offence of which they stood accused carried a penalty of less than 10 years' imprisonment. All courts had at least one legal aid lawyer, and provisions on legal aid were scheduled to be updated.

Articles 11–20

52. **Mr. Rukhledev** asked whether the State party's laws on disaster risk reduction and impact mitigation included plans to inform persons with disabilities of how to ensure their personal safety during disasters and, if so, what those plans were and how they were implemented. He wished to know whether sign language interpretation was provided in courts and detention facilities and, if so, how the interpreters' qualifications were assessed and who covered the cost of the service.

53. **Mr. Chaker** asked whether the professionals concerned received regular training in how to improve the safety of persons with disabilities in all situations of risk or emergency. He urged the State party to cooperate with organizations of persons with disabilities in that regard.

54. **Mr. Langvad**, referring to paragraph 109 of the report, asked what the term "reasonable classification" meant with regard to the legal capacity of persons with disabilities. He wished to know whether the Disability Rights Act was in line with article 12 of the Convention, specifically whether it provided for supported decision-making schemes. It would be useful to know what the impact of the Three-Year Interim Plan 2008–2010 and the Thirteenth Plan 2013–2016 had been on the effective inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community at the local, regional and national levels.

55. **Mr. Lovászy** said that he would appreciate more detailed information on the Government's commitment to facilitate supported decision-making, including any legal

measures, plans or publicly stated goals in that regard. It would be interesting to know whether legal aid was provided to persons with disabilities at all stages of proceedings, including for police procedures. With regard to sign language interpretation, it would be helpful to know how the courts understood the word "necessary" and whether the service was free. He would appreciate the delegation's comments on the extent to which organizations of persons with disabilities had been involved in the drafting of the new mental health law. Lastly, what kind of specific support had been introduced for the families of children with disabilities and what community-based services had been made available since the submission of the initial report?

56. **Mr. Alsaif** asked what steps had been taken to provide support in the community, including personal assistance, so that persons with disabilities could live where they wished.

57. **Mr. Martin**, drawing the State party's attention to article 12 of the Convention and the Committee's general comment No. 1, asked what the time frame was for the introduction of supported decision-making and whether persons with disabilities, their families and service providers would receive training on that subject. He also asked whether persons with disabilities were subjected to sterilization or any other medical procedures without their consent and, if so, what steps were being taken to prevent such occurrences.

58. **Mr. You** Liang, pointing out that the delegation did not include a single person with disabilities, said that the State party should pay more attention to the composition of its delegations in future. He would like to know what the legal capacity of persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities was. It would be helpful to know what measures had been and would be taken to ensure that medical professionals did not administer experimental treatments to or perform forced surgery on persons with autism, who generally had difficulty freely expressing their views. In the light of reports by civil society organizations that the budget for rehabilitation services was very limited, he would appreciate information on the availability and affordability of rehabilitation services and assistive devices.

59. **Mr. Ruskus** said that, notwithstanding the State party's claims to the contrary, the Committee had received information that some persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities were detained in their homes or forcibly placed in psychiatric institutions, that some were chained, tortured or given overdoses in such institutions and that various medical treatments were administered without the consent of the person concerned. Therefore, he would appreciate a reply to question 16 of the list of issues on the measures taken to ensure that no person was institutionalized or deprived of liberty on the basis of impairment, especially in the light of the mental health law currently being drafted. He would also appreciate information on the steps taken to harmonize all policies and measures regarding persons with psychosocial and other disabilities with the provisions of the Convention, particularly article 14.

60. **Mr. Buntan**, noting the country's diversity, asked to what extent persons with different types of disabilities from various ethnicities had been involved in the preparation of national reconstruction plans following the major earthquake suffered by Nepal and how the Government disseminated disaster risk reduction materials in accessible formats in all the languages spoken in the country, even those that did not have a written script. Noting that the Disability Rights Act did not address the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities because the Associations Registration Act already did, he wished to know how the Government intended to establish the legal basis for the participation of such organizations in decision-making and the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy and legislation, since the Associations Registration Act merely provided for the legal existence of organizations without guaranteeing their participation in the formulation of law and policy.

61. **Mr. Basharu** asked what measures had been put in place to ensure the accessibility of courts, police stations and prisons and to provide legal information in special formats, such as Braille, sign language and Easy Read. He would appreciate information on any training provided to justice officials, police officers and prison staff in responding to the particular needs of persons with disabilities. Did teachers receive training in mobility skills

in relation to blind students? Were blind persons provided with canes and street crossings equipped with audible signals?

62. **The Chair** asked how many persons with disabilities, disaggregated by sex and ethnicity, had been able to end their legal guardianship arrangement or other form of substitute decision-making since the entry into force of the Convention and how many had been provided with support in order to live independent lives. She wished to know how many times hospitals had refrained from imposing treatment and had administered treatment based on a person's free consent. It would be interesting to know how many women with disabilities had been given information on sexual and reproductive health and rights and how many health-care professionals had received training in human rights and in how to detect, respond to and report violations. In reference to the reported gang rapes of women with disabilities, she would appreciate information on the number of alleged rapists who had been prosecuted and on the services provided to the women concerned.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.